

35 U.S.C. § 201(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-22 and 29-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,623,652 to Vora et al.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Vora et al. reference fails to satisfy the requirements for a finding of anticipation of claims 1-22 and 29-34. The standard for an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 has been well established by the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and is summarized in M.P.E.P. § 2131, which states that a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. In addition, the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. For a prior art reference to anticipate a claimed invention, every element of the claimed invention must be identically shown in a single reference, and these elements must be arranged as in the claim under review.

Independent claim 1 recites a method of associating information with an object in a file, the method comprising:

- a) associating a search key with the object in said file; and
- b) scheduling a search for said information using said search key, for automatic future execution by a searching mechanism operable to execute scheduled searches.

Applicant respectfully submits that Vora et al. fail to disclose "associating a search key with the object in said file", as recited in claim 1.

Vora et al. disclose a method and apparatus for searching for information in a network and for controlling the display of searchable information on display services in the network. Text documents (which may include other information such as graphics), such as newspaper articles or articles from scientific journals for example, are stored on a mass memory device 17 of a

server computer system 9. Users of client computer systems, such as a computer system 33, may search through those text documents. The searching process typically involves the user of a client computer system specifying certain words which the user believes should be in documents which the user desires to see. The user of the computer will typically type into a keyboard these words which are used to define a search request. The user then requests that the search be performed, typically by selecting an option representing a start search command which is displayed on a display device 47. A processor 37 of the client computer system 33 sends this first search request over the network through network interfaces 35 and 25 to a processor 10 of the server computer system 9, which executes the search requests by performing a first search through the documents stored in the mass memory 17 (Vora et al., col. 6, lines 34-54). To effectively schedule future searches, Vora et al. disclose that a user may specify such a search request, and may schedule times for the search request to be performed to search for new documents which have been added to the information sources (e.g. the mass memory device 17) which are selected for searching. Alternatively, searches may occur automatically when new documents are added to the information sources selected for searching, and the user may schedule times for summary reports of the results of such automatic searches to be generated for display to the user (Vora et al., col. 14 lines 8-30).

The Examiner appears to have compared either Figure 2, block 201 of Vora et al., or items 726, 733 and 735 of Figure 7B, with "associating a search key with the object in said file" as recited in claim 1. With respect to Figure 2, Vora et al. disclose that a memory 11 of the server computer system 9 includes data 201, which specifies a first search request including search parameters and scheduled search times (Vora et al., col. 8, lines 49-54). However, simply storing a search request in memory in this manner is well known in the art, and is not the same as associating a search key with an object in a file, as recited in claim 1.

Ranking (by index)

(object in a file?)
can be search

With respect to Figure 7B, Vora et al. disclose that by actuating "radio button 726" of a search scheduling window 725, the system will, in one embodiment, automatically search at a scheduled search time for new and modified documents or, in an alternative embodiment, automatically search anytime a new document is added to an information source and the scheduled time determines when the results of such search would be delivered to the requesting client system. Alternatively, if the user actuates "radio button 733", the search is not scheduled but rather is performed only when requested. When the user is satisfied with the contents of the search schedule window 725, the user can actuate an "okay button 735" (Vora et al., col. 14 line 51 to col. 15 line 10). Generally, it appears that Figure 7B and the description thereof relates only to scheduling of the search. Neither Figure 7B and the accompanying description of Vora et al., nor any other passage in Vora et al., discloses "associating a search key with the object in said file", as recited in claim 1.

Numerous advantages flow from associating a search key with an object in a file, as recited in claim 1, in comparison with references such as Vora et al. which merely store search requests in memory, without any such association with an object in a file. For example, advantages of an exemplary embodiment, in which the file may include an electronic calendar and the object may include the name of a person or other entity in a calendar entry with whom a user of the calendar is scheduled to meet, are discussed in applicant's specification at p.3, lines 3-15 and elsewhere throughout applicant's specification. Alternatively, similar advantages may be obtained in embodiments involving other types of objects and files.

In summary, Vora et al. fail to disclose "associating a search key with the object in said file", as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Vora et al. fail to disclose at least one element of claim 1, and therefore, the Vora et al. reference fails to satisfy the requirements for a finding of anticipation of claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 2-7 are allowable due to their dependencies, as well as the additional subject-matter that each of these claims recites.

Independent claim 8 recites a computer readable medium for providing codes for directing a processor circuit to:

- a) associating a search key with an object in a file; ...

Similarly, independent claim 9 recites a computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave, comprising:

- a) a first code segment for directing a processor circuit to associate a search key with an object in a file; ...

Independent claim 10 recites an apparatus for associating information with an object in a file, the apparatus comprising:

- a) means for associating a search key with the object in said file;

...

Independent claim 11 recites:

An apparatus for associating information with an object in a file, the apparatus comprising a scheduler including a component for associating a search key with the object in the file, ...

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 8-11 are not anticipated by Vora et al., for reasons including those presented above in connection with claim 1.

Claims 12-19 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 11. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 12-19 are allowable due to their dependencies, as well as the additional subject-matter that each of these claims recites.

Independent claim 20 recites a method of associating information with an object in a file, the method comprising:

- a) initiating a pre-scheduled search for said information at a pre-scheduled time, using a search key associated with said object; and
- b) associating with said object a result of said search.

As discussed above in connection with claim 1, Vora et al. fail to disclose associating a search key with an object in a file. Thus, Vora et al. fail to disclose "using a search key associated with said object", as recited in claim 20. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claim 20 is not anticipated by Vora et al., and respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 20 be withdrawn.

Claims 21 and 22 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 20. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 21 and 22 are allowable due to their dependencies, as well as the additional subject-matter that each of these claims recites.

Independent claims 29 and 30 each recite "using a search key associated with an object in a file". Similarly, independent claims 31 and 32 each recite "using a search key associated with said object", where the antecedent "said object" is defined in each claim as "an object in a file". Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 29-32 are not anticipated by Vora et al., for reasons including those presented above in connection with claim 20 and claim 1.

Claims 33 and 34 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 32. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 33 and 34 are allowable due to their dependencies, as well as the additional subject-matter that each of these claims recites.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

The Examiner has rejected claims 23-28 and 35-40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vora et al., in view of Stark (U.S. Patent No. 5,935,210).

Claims 23-28 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 20, and claims 35-40 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 32. As Applicant respectfully submits that claims 20 and 32 have been shown to be allowable under the previous heading of this response, Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 23-28 and 35-40 are allowable due to their dependencies, as well as the additional subject-matter that each of these claims recites.

Formal Drawings

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication that the formal drawings filed on January 21, 2000 are accepted.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant respectfully notes that an Information Disclosure Statement, enclosing a Form PTO-1449 and copies of two references, was filed on December 20, 1999. Applicant respectfully requests that the next communication from the Examiner include a copy of the Form PTO-1449, initialled by the Examiner, to confirm that the references have been considered by the Examiner and will be listed in the "References Cited" section of the patent when it issues.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued, accompanied by the initialled Form PTO-1449 as requested above. Should the Examiner have any outstanding concerns, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned agent by telephone, to expedite the prosecution and allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,


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